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Your Thursday Briefing

By CHRIS STANFORD

Tourists were forced to evacuate Yosemite National Park in California on Wednesday because of an encroaching wildfire. It is one of 75 large blazes that have burned nearly four million acres nationwide so far this year. Jim Wilson/The New York Times

Good morning.

Here's what you need to know:

A surprise deal on trade

• President Trump welcomed "a new phase in the relationship between the United States and the European Union" on Wednesday, after reaching an agreement to hold off on imposing further tariffs and to work toward dropping existing ones on steel

and aluminum.

Mr. Trump made the announcement in the Rose Garden with the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker. (Not in attendance: A CNN reporter who was barred for what the White House deemed "inappropriate" questions.)

The U.S. has already imposed billions of dollars in tariffs on European products for what the Trump administration has labeled unfair trade practices, raising costs for American companies and consumers.

• **Separately**, the federal budget deficit is growing much faster than economists had predicted, in part because the amount of corporate taxes collected by the federal government has fallen after the tax overhaul.

Mike Pompeo defends Russia policy

• In an occasionally testy appearance in the Senate on Wednesday, the secretary of state offered a long list of actions the Trump administration has taken against Moscow.

He dismissed questions about how those policies squared with President Trump's warm comments about President Vladimir Putin of Russia and refused to discuss the two leaders' meeting in Finland last week. "Presidents are entitled to have private meetings," he said.

He also acknowledged that North Korea was continuing to produce nuclear fuel for its weapons program, even as the administration claims progress toward the goal of denuclearization.

The hearing came the same day the White House announced that a planned follow-up meeting between Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin would be pushed to next year, when it said the special counsel investigation would be over.

• **The official overseeing the Russia inquiry**, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, was targeted by House Republicans on Wednesday, who began a long-shot effort to impeach him.

A promising milestone on Alzheimer's

• For the first time in a large clinical trial, a drug was able both to reduce plaques in the brains of patients and to slow the progression of dementia.

If the results presented on Wednesday are borne out by other trials, the drug, known as BAN2401, may be the first to successfully attack both the brain changes and the symptoms of the disease.

• **Aside from a couple of medications** that can slow memory decline for a few months, there's no effective treatment for Alzheimer's, which affects about 44 million people worldwide, including 5.5 million Americans. Those numbers are expected to triple by 2050.

"Water is there"

• On Mars, that is.

For the first time, scientists have found a large lake beneath one of the planet's ice caps, offering an exciting new place to search for life beyond Earth.

• **Mars is currently the closest** it has been to us in 15 years, about 35.8 million miles away. The planet will be at its brightest starting Friday. Here's how to watch.

Former cricket star leads in Pakistan

• The party of Imran Khan pulled firmly ahead in the early count after Wednesday's elections, but the results are being disputed by dozens of candidates who lodged complaints of vote rigging.

"The Daily": Which to believe: words or policies?

• President Trump's statements often contradict his administration's actions.

Listen on a computer, an iOS device or an Android device.

Business

• **Sergio Marchionne,** the executive who helped transform Fiat Chrysler from a struggling automaker into a manufacturing giant, died after complications from surgery. He was 66.

• **A series of scandals is catching up to Facebook**. The social network announced on Wednesday that advertising and user growth had slowed in the second quarter, and that they were unlikely to improve any time soon.

• **For years**, Silicon Valley has had a near-absolutist understanding of free speech. But that's changing, our tech columnist writes.

• **A lawsuit** accusing President Trump of improperly benefiting from his company's Washington hotel cleared a major hurdle on Wednesday.

• **U.S. stocks** were up on Wednesday. Here's a snapshot of global markets today.

Smarter Living

Tips for a more fulfilling life.

• **Summer hair** inspiration for men.

• **An aspirin a day** may help your heart. But it depends on your weight.

• **Recipe of the day**: Delivery can be tempting, but this pan-roasted salmon takes about 15 minutes.

Noteworthy

• You probably live in a political bubble

We've published an extremely detailed map of the results of the 2016 presidential election, broken down by voting precinct. Here are some of the highlights.

The map shows that more than one in five voters lived in a precinct where 80 percent of the two-party vote went either to Donald Trump or to Hillary Clinton. But the map also reveals surprising diversity. Explore it in depth here.

• The big business of being Gwyneth Paltrow

The actress started Goop, an email newsletter of recommendations, in 2008. It has since become a $250 million company and one of the most contentious brands in the

wellness industry. Read our profile in The Times Magazine.

• Russian fever

The country is in the headlines and on our best-seller lists. Daniel Silva's "The Other Woman" tells the story of an art restorer and assassin who takes on the Russians. The book is No. 1 on our hardcover fiction and combined print and e-book fiction lists. You can find all of our best-seller lists here.

• The state of reproduction

A study suggests that sperm counts have been dropping for decades. Is this how the big dystopia begins? Silicon Valley is ready to help men get their mojo back.

Here's more from this week's Style section.

• Best of late-night TV

Jimmy Kimmel discussed the newly released tape of a conversation between President Trump and Michael Cohen, his former personal lawyer: "For any other president, a tape like this — on which we hear his voice, his married voice, suggesting that his lawyer pay a Playboy bunny $150,000 in cash to keep her quiet — for any other president, there would be an address to the nation tonight."

• Quotation of the day

"It is liquid, and it's salty, and it's in contact with rocks. There are all the ingredients for thinking that life can be there, or can be maintained there if life once existed on Mars."

— Enrico Flamini, who oversaw the research that detected a lake beneath an ice cap on Mars.

• The Times, in other words

Here's an image of today's front page, and links to our Opinion content and crossword puzzles.

• What we're reading

Rod Nordland, an international correspondent, recommends this piece from Prospect magazine: “This readable profile looks at the U.N. human rights chief, Zeid Ra’ad al-Hussein, a Jordanian prince who surprised everyone by becoming an articulate and outspoken advocate. He has called out ‘a parade of “xenophobes, populists and racists”: Wilders, Farage, Orban, Le Pen, Trump and — in the same breath — Islamic State.’ ”

Back Story

The man who has been verified by Guinness World Records as the world’s oldest celebrated his 113th birthday on Wednesday.

Masazo Nonaka was born on the Japanese island of Hokkaido in 1905, the same year Albert Einstein published his theory of special relativity and the Wright brothers conducted some of their early powered flights.

Masazo Nonaka in April, after being certified as the world's oldest man.

Masazo Nonaka in April, after being certified as the world's oldest man.

Kyodo, via Reuters

The problem faced by most supercentenarians — people who are more than 110 years old — is that their ages can't be validated unless they have birth records and multiple documents from throughout their lives.

So while gerontologists say the number of documented supercentenarians is around 150, the unverified total may be closer to 1,000.

A man who died this year in Chile had claimed to be 121, and a man who died in Indonesia last year said he was 146. But neither man's age was independently verified.

Although Mr. Nonaka is the oldest living man whose age has been validated, he's only the 17th-oldest person, according to the Gerontology Research Group, whose list shows that most supercentenarians are women.

The world's oldest person ever authenticated was Jeanne Louise Calment of France, who lived to 122.

Anna Schaverien wrote today's Back Story.

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